

THE WILSON BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL

Kansas City has been officially selected as the place for the next meeting of the W. O. C. The meeting will be held during the Christmas holidays in conjunction with the great meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. By referring to the record of our meetings as printed on the cover page it will be seen that we have met with the American Association on five other occasions. Since the W. O. C. has been holding annual meetings we have not failed to meet under the wing of the American Association on every occasion when this organization has held its convocation within the area of the middle west. This seems now to have become an established precedent for our guidance, as was foreseen in the first place. The noteworthy fact seems to be that the American Association comes so frequently within our reach. However, we must not intimate that the middle west is in any way specially favored—doubtless the meetings are distributed with perfect equity on some basis or other.

We may congratulate ourselves that this great scientific organization—the largest in the world in numbers, and perhaps, in power—recognizes the middle west as an integral part of the country and as part of its constituency. This is, perhaps, sufficient reason why we should avail ourselves of its hospitality at every opportunity. We may, in return, show some small measure of hospitality by meeting in conjunction.

It should be entirely unnecessary to say anything to our membership in behalf of the American Association, and yet it is doubtful if more than fifteen percent of our members are also members of the larger organization, though many more are eligible. The American Association, with a membership exceeding twelve thousand, is the representative scientific organization of America. It embraces all of the sciences, and is minutely and efficiently organized for the advancement of scientific learning.

Attendance upon one of these great gatherings of scientific men affords an inspiration for the enjoyment of which one might well suffer some sacrifice. The attendance at these meetings is always large enough to secure reduced railroad fares. Our W. O. C. members should become familiar with the rules governing this reduced fare, and plan to take advantage of it in attending the Kansas City meeting. All W. O. C. members will be entitled to a railroad rate of one fare

and a half on the certificate plan in attending the Kansas City meetings. At the time of purchasing your full one-way ticket to Kansas City you must have the agent make out the certificate of the Western Passenger Association. This certificate must then be properly validated at Kansas City, and if the total number of such certificates validated at Kansas City reaches two hundred and fifty, you will be entitled to purchase your return ticket at half the regular fare. Tickets on this plan may be purchased from December 24 to 30, and are good to return until January 6, 1926. The exact dates of the W. O. C. meeting will be made known to you by the Secretary. The meetings of the American Association begin on Monday, December 28, and continue throughout that week.

Consideration of our next annual meeting brings to mind several questions of policy, one of which is the matter of tenure of office. There are in general, perhaps, about two considerations in selecting officers—one is the desire to confer an honor upon a worthy member, the other is to get certain necessary work done. Honorary offices are usually of short tenure, and in most societies it is the presidency which partakes of this nature. But in such cases there is usually an executive secretary on salary or stipend, through whom the continuity of organization is maintained. In small societies with limited funds each office may be regarded as a *job*, not without honor; and a division of labor becomes imperative.

But the continuity of organization cannot be overlooked. Short tenure of office in such a case prevents the building of effective organization, and disrupts continuity. A successful organization must depend upon continuity of policy. One annual term of office is usually required for an officer to become familiar with his job, to build up his card index system, or merely to compose a letter to delinquent members. About the time he has become an efficient officer he begs off, and a new man is put in to go through the same educative process. Our conclusion is that a longer tenure for efficient officers is a better policy for small societies of limited income.

We have now been in more or less intimate touch with the affairs of the W. O. C. for over ten years, and have no recollection of any officer seeking to hold onto office. It is usually necessary to importune efficient officers on the plea of loyalty and service: and then, oftentimes, they feel that they have done their "bit" in the short term.

The Editor might find it in his heart to discuss this subject at greater length, but he trusts that these general and impersonal reflections may be understood by the Club in the spirit in which they are put down.

The Editor wishes that someone would claim an unsigned note entitled "Some Notes on the Cowbird", which is awaiting publication.

We beg pardon for the inadvertent omission of Prof. Swenk's name from the head of the General Notes department in the June issue.